

Ms. McCollum: Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.Res. 1312, a resolution commemorating National Teacher Week. This week in May recognizes the millions of educators who play an integral role in shaping the lives of children across the country.

Teachers are charged with the essential responsibility of preparing the youngest generation of Americans to compete and excel in our global economy. Every day, they sacrifice for the sake of their students. They are relentless and admirable in performing a difficult and sometimes thankless job. They walk into their classrooms and face a daunting task - ensuring each student learns and succeeds.

That is why I'm working for our students, teachers and schools, especially during these economic hard times. Without federal aid to protect education jobs, budget crises at the state and local level will result in increased class sizes and massive layoffs. As a Member of Congress, it is my job to do what I can to make sure classroom doors stay open so students can learn. Last year, I voted for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5), which saved or created over 400,000 teaching jobs nationally, and nearly 7,000 in Minnesota.

In addition, I support the creation of a \$23 billion Education Jobs Fund. Without this injection of federal funding, hundreds of thousands of teachers across the country will be laid off, resulting in increased class sizes and reduced quality of education. This job-saving provision was incorporated in two bills I supported: the Jobs for Main Street Act (H.R. 2847), which passed the House last December, and the Local Jobs for America Act (H.R. 4812), still pending in the House. I join many of my colleagues in urging the Senate to include this fund in their next jobs package.

Each one of us has had a teacher who made a difference in our lives. I am honored to commemorate this valuable core of our community. I am also pleased to join students and teachers at Maxfield Elementary in St. Paul Public School District 625 and all Minnesotans in congratulating 6th grade teacher Ryan Vernosh as the 2010 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. This recognition is a reflection of his commitment and dedication to making a positive impact on students' academic success in his classroom. Mr. Vernosh is one of our finest teachers and is deserving of this honor.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to thank the teachers who have made differences in their lives and honor them by supporting H.Res. 1312.

Madam Speaker, I yield back my time.